(a) whether it is a fact the Government are considering any legislation for effective management and dealing successfully with the situation in future in the event of disaster, in view of the condition prevailed due to Tsunami disaster in the coastal areas of Southern States of the country and in Andaman and Nicobar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) up-to-date status of the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (c) It is proposed to enact a law on Disaster Management to provide for the requisite institutional mechanism and powers for undertaking the prevention and mitigation measures as also mechanism for ensuring preparedness, capacity building and coordinating response for various kinds of disasters. The central legislation may *inter alia* provide for constitution of a National Disaster Management Authority and an Executive Committee of Secretaries which shall be responsible for assisting the Authority to draw up disaster management plan, coordinating and monitoring its implementation as also coordinating response to a disaster under the guidelines of the Authority and the directions of the Central Government. The Authority may set up an Advisory Committee of Experts. The Disaster Management Bill, 2005 is proposed to be introduced in the current session of Parliament.

Nexus between criminal mafia and left-wing extremists

*29. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the nexus between criminal mafia and left-wing extremists is on the rise in the country;

(b) whether Government at any time have investigated the finances that the naxalites are getting;

(c) if so, what is the outcome of such investigation;

(d) whether it is a fact that some of the States have started negotiations with naxalites to stop violence in the society; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the progress of the talks that have taken place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) No reports suggesting the nexus between criminal mafia and the naxal groups have come to the notice of the Government.

(b) and (c) Available reports indicate that the naxal groups have been raising funds mainly through extortion, ransom and levy/cess on sale/ movement of forest produce and other commodities.

(d) and (e) The Andhra Pradesh Government has entered into peace talks with the CPML-PWG and other naxal outfits. The first round of talks was held at hyderabad from October 15 to 18, 2004. Though the naxal outfits have announced unilateral withdrawal from the peace talks on 17.1.2005, the State Government has expressed its commitment to continue talks while taking necessary steps to maintain law and order in the State.

Revision in natural calamities assistance norms

*30. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have revised the Natural Calamities Assistance norms based on the report of Expert Committee;

(b) if so, what are the major changes suggested;

(c) whether norms have been fixed for declaring a Natural Calamity as National Disaster; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) Assistance to the people affected by natural calamities is based on the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission for the period 1st April, 2000 to 31st March, 2005. In pursuance of the Eleventh Finance Commission, Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure had notified the two schemes, viz., Scheme for constitution and administration of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF). As required in these schemes, the Ministry of Home Affairs have laid down the norms of assistance for relief based on the recommendations of the Expert Committees.

(b) The major changes suggested in the norms include —